

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the present application. Claims 2, 11, and 20 were canceled; claims 1, 3-5, 10, 12-14, 16-19, and 21-23 were amended; and no claims were added. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

I. Objection to Claims

The Examiner has stated that claims 2-6, 11-15, and 20-24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 10, and 19 to include the limitations of the allowable claims 2, 11, and 20, respectively and have canceled claims 2, 11, and 20. By amending claims 1, 10, and 19 to include all the limitations of claims 2, 11, and 20, Applicants submit that Applicants have effectively rewritten claims 1, 10, and 19 in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, Applicants believe that currently amended independent claims 1, 10, and 19 are now in condition for allowance.

Additionally, Applicants have amended claims 3-5 to depend from the amended independent claim 1, which includes all the limitations of allowable claim 2, instead of the now canceled allowable claim 2. Applicants have also amended claims 12-14 and 16-18 to depend from the amended independent claim 10, which includes all the limitations of allowable claim 11, instead of the now canceled allowable claim 11. Applicants have also amended claims 21-23 to depend from the amended independent claim 19, which includes all the limitations of allowable claim 20, instead of the now canceled allowable claim 20.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 3-10, 12-19, and 21-24 are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants submit that the amendments made by Applicants' render moot the various rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 presented in the Office Action.

Applicants have amended claim 1, 10, and 19 and cancelled claims 2, 11, and 20 from further consideration in this application. Applicants are not conceding in this application that those claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

II. Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the cited references and is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,

/Gerald H. Glanzman/

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